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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/687,092	10/17/2003	Mariastella Scandola	023349-00283	9101
4372	7590	01/11/2005		
ARENT FOX KINTNER PLOTKIN & KAHN 1050 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 400 WASHINGTON, DC 20036				
			EXAMINER ASINOVSKY, OLGA	
			ART UNIT 1711	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 01/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/687,092

Applicant(s)

SCANDOLA ET AL.

Examiner

Olga Asinovsky

Art Unit

1711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 12,14,15,17 and 19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12,14,15,17 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/897,984.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/17/2003</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. Claims 15, 17 and 19 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 15 is redundant claim with respect to claim 12. A broad recitation “a composite material comprising a polymer” includes nothing more than a polymer-grafted natural fibers, wherein the polymer is a polyether in claim 12.

Claim 17 is redundant claim with respect to claim 14. A broad recitation “a composite material using polymer” includes nothing more than a polymer-grafted natural fibers=product-by-process in claim 14.

2. Claim 19 provides for the use of a polymer-grafted natural fibers, but, since the claim does not set forth any steps involved in the method/process, it is unclear what method/process applicant is intending to encompass. A claim is indefinite where it merely recites a use without any active, positive steps delimiting how this use is actually practiced.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed recitation of a use, without setting forth any steps involved in the process, results in an improper definition of a process, i.e., results in a claim which is not a proper process claim under 35 U.S.C. 101. See for example *Ex parte Dunki*, 153 USPQ 678 (Bd.App. 1967) and *Clinical Products, Ltd. v. Brenner*, 255 F. Supp. 131, 149 USPQ 475 (D.D.C. 1966).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Coleman-Kammula U.S. Patent 4,857,588 or Lawrie et al U.S. Patent 2,109,295.

5. GB'176 discloses a reaction product of cellulose

Coleman-Kammula discloses cellulose fibrous material pretreated with sodium hydroxide solution and then reacted with an organic compound comprising a hydrocarbyl chain comprising epoxy group, column 5, claim 1 and column 6, lines 2-3.

A hydrocarbyl compound having epoxy groups is readable in applicants' claimed polyether. The product-by-process in Coleman-Kammula's invention is the analogous to a product in the present claims.

Lawrie discloses a process for treating a cellulose fabric with an alkali solution and an alkylene oxide compound of the general formula recited at column 3, line 45. An alkylene oxide compound is readable in applicants' claimed polyether.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 14 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee U.S. Patent 3,492,082 in view of GB 1,590,176.

8. Lee discloses a cellulose material having hydroxyl groups that are converted to sulfonate groups, and then, a graft polymerization with polymerizable monomer having at least one vinyl group and functional group(s), column 2, lines 14-30 and column 8, lines 20-62.

9. Lee does not disclose functionalized polyether.

10. GB'176 discloses modified cellulose hydrate materials with an oxyalkylene polymer having functional groups, pages 6-13. The oxyalkylene polymer in GB'176 is readable in applicants' claims as being a polyether having functional group(s).

11. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify a grafted cellulose material in Lee invention by employing an oxyalkylene polymer as disclosed by GB'176 because any additional functionalized polyether for treating a cellulose material is expected in Lee invention as being an additional hydroxyl-containing polymers grafted on to a cellulose backbone, Lee, column 2, lines 10-12.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Olga Asinovsky whose telephone number is 571-272-1066. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 to 5:30 pm.

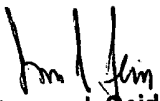
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Seidleck can be reached on 571-272-1078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Olga Asinovsky
Examiner
Art Unit 1711

O.A.

January 9, 2005


James J. Seidleck
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700